

MS CENTER PROGRAMS 2020



Classes | Programs | Services

EXERCISE CLASSES FOR MS ONLINE

The MS Center has several online classes conducted by our long-time instructors, Courtney, Elaine, and Harry. We also contract with two studios, Ellio Pilates Studio in Fort Myers, and Meant2Move Personal Training in Naples. All are great classes, and most are offered around noon time each day, so it is easy to remember. Classes are usually one hour, unless otherwise noted. We received a grant to purchase the appropriate equipment to start recording the classes so that you can view later via a secure link. Unfortunately, we could not record the interactive Zoom classes because the platform is not HIPAA compliant.

MS Center Classes

Mobility & Balance

Monday 12:00pm 30 min of chair class followed by 30 min of regular
Instructor: Courtney

In this class we will work on your balance, strength, and mobility to help you move better through life. Class will consist of barre work, chair work, and strengthening using Thera-bands and/or small weights. These are appropriate for any level. We will modify all exercises to make sure you are working within your comfort zone.

Tai Chi

Instructor: Harry Grimm
Tuesdays 12:00pm

Open the Door to Tai Chi is a beginner class that is easily adapted to either standing or seated movements. This basic program strips away the nuances of tai chi that often make it seem difficult or out of reach for many people.

Foundation Training

Instructor: Harry Grimm
Thursdays at 12:00pm 30-minute class

Foundation Training is a safe and effective exercise program created to help change movement patterns. These simple and

transformative exercises are designed to naturally heal back pain, strengthen your core, and improve posture. You will feel the difference.

Yoga for MS

Mat Yoga

Saturdays at 11am

Mind-body therapies like yoga are also a practical therapeutic approach in MS because of their low risk of physical stress. An added benefit is the ability to calm yourself and decrease stress through breathing and meditation techniques.

Chair Yoga

Instructor: Elaine Malone
Saturdays at 12:00pm

This class is designed for people who have difficulty getting on the floor, those with limited mobility, and/or challenges with balance. In chair yoga, the chair replaces the yoga mat and becomes an extension of your body allowing you to take full advantage of yoga which with a regular practice will improve your flexibility, strength, balance, and posture.

Contact Beth@mscenterswfl.org to register for MS Center classes if you have not already done so.

Meant2Move Classes for MS

Functional Core Training - 30min class

Certified Instructors Samantha Huntington or
Spencer Richardson

Wednesdays at 12 pm

This class uses bodyweight exercises to help strengthen the core muscles and stabilize the spine during movements. (No equipment necessary.)

**Register at Spencer.richardson317@gmail.com or
(239) 919-4733**

Flexibility Training - 30min class

Certified Instructors Samantha Huntington or
Spencer Richardson

Fridays at 12 pm

This class uses beginner stretching exercises to help relieve tension and stiffness from the whole body.

**Register at Spencer.richardson317@gmail.com or
(239) 919-4733**

Ellio Pilates, Tai Chi & More

Pilates for MS

Instructor Vicki Brown

Tuesdays at 10:30am

This Pilates class focuses on the needs of those with multiple sclerosis. Includes breath work, flexibility, core strength, balance, stress relief and more. Work is done standing, seated on chair and/ or mat.

You will need a mat or towel and a chair (preferably a harder chair without arms).

Please call Vicki at 239.770.8670 to register



SOCIAL GROUPS (SUPPORT GROUPS)

Last year we launched a social group for clients living in Charlotte County and North Lee County. The group normally met in North Fort Myers for two hours, on 4th Saturdays at the new North Fort Myers community center. Right now we are working on Zoom meetings for our social groups until we can meet in person.

The Central and South Social Groups will launch in July. I prefer to keep the groups in geographical segments so that distance will not be an issue to meet when things open up.

Caregiver Support Group was attempted in the past, but we did not have good attendance. I will put this on the survey. Please check with your local support system (family or friends) to find out if they have any interest.

MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING

We offer mental health counseling for our clients and for their caregivers (as it relates to the client's MS). We also offer family counseling. We have five licensed mental health counselors, and one Life Coach. Currently three of our counselors are offering Telehealth mental health counseling via a HIPAA compliant service.

ART CLASSES

We offered several different types of therapeutic art classes at the MS Center:

- Beginners Acrylic Art
- Intermediate Acrylic Art
- Watercolors Art
- Pastels Art

We also have Acrylic Art classes in Cape Coral and in Fort Myers. The art program is funded by the Sumner Charitable Foundation.

Art Classes have been suspended due to COVID 19 and social distancing. We are working on an interim solution to provide online art classes via Zoom. We will be providing art kits to students if they need them so that they can participate in the class at home. They can arrange to pick up the kits at the Center (curbside) or we can deliver to those with transportation difficulties.



EQUINE THERAPY



We have a contract with Naples Therapeutic Riding Center in Naples and Special Equestrians in Fort Myers, to provide therapeutic riding for our clients. “The benefits include improved posture and balance, stronger muscles, cognitive improvements, improved hand-eye coordination, improved fine and gross motor control, enhanced communication skills, increased self-confidence and self-esteem and new problem-solving skills. Many riders experience a freedom of motion and ability they simply do not or cannot enjoy in other aspects of their lives.” NTRC website. *Currently there is a waiting list for this program.*

EXERCISE THERAPY (SHORT TERM PERSONAL TRAINING)

An FGCU professor and doctor Physical Therapy, Dr. Mollie Venglar, helped me to design this program for people with MS. I realized early on that our clients needed more support to help them stay strong when they completed their physical therapy. This program has been able to bridge the gap between PT and an exercise program.

The personal trainers at Lee Health's Wellness Centers help our clients to become acclimated to exercise equipment to help strengthen upper and lower limbs, as well as their core. The trainers at these facilities have a degree in Exercise Science. They also participated in a special training by Dr Venglar, in which she also gave them a special handbook to educate them on multiple sclerosis. The client is given an initial assessment, and a post assessment. When the sessions have been completed the client walks away with an individualized exercise plan. We have received great reviews on this program. Several clients have since joined the Wellness Center to continue their exercise programs.

We tried to contract with NCH Wellness Center a few years ago, but they were unable to accommodate us. However, I am working on launching a personal training program with Meant2Move Fitness Center in Naples when it is safe to do so. They have experience working with individuals with MS.



PHYSICAL THERAPY EVALUATIONS

New clients who have limited mobility and/or significant balance issues are referred to Dr Venglar for a PT Assessment who sees clients by appointment at our center. After the assessment and makes recommendations to the client. The recommendations can range from referral to physical therapy, tips on transferring, to use of walking aids. This service can also be requested by existing clients.

Shane Smith, DPT, a physical therapist in Naples will also be providing this service to our clients starting this summer. Watch the newsletter for updates!

CARE COORDINATION AND CASE MANAGEMENT

We have contracted with several social workers who are experienced working with people with MS or other chronic illnesses. They will have flexible schedules and be assigned to different geographical areas. These professionals will be responsible for the intake interviews of new clients and annual assessments of current clients.

Some clients face a multitude of challenges because of their disability. Issues such as a decline in their disease, a new disease such as cancer, or a change in marital status, can all cause a crisis for a person with MS. Case Management is available to clients who need extra help. They case managers can link you to resources and connect you to other services to help address your needs.

UPCOMING PROGRAM - DISABILITY COUNSELING



We have determined that there is a great need for a Disability Specialist. The transition from work to disability is a complicated and emotional undertaking. This process can also be financially devastating for some clients since it is often a long waiting period until Social Security approves their disability. We have connections to resources to help with these issues.

